

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 MATAMO 00030 070009Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AGRE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 SS-15 NSC-05
SIL-01 LAB-04 /057 W
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P 062030Z MAR 78
FM AMCONSUL MATAMOROS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 421
INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY
AMCONSUL HERMOSILLO PRIORITY

UNCLAS MATAMOROS 0030

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS, CGEN, MX
SUBJECT: BLOCKADING OF INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE BY STRIKING
U.S. FARMERS
REF: MATAMOROS 0026 AND 0027 (NOTAL)

1. ON SATURDAY MARCH 4 THE STRIKING FARMERS MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN FARMERS ASSOCIATION THEIR NUMBERS SWELLED TO ABOUT 600 AGAIN BLOCKADED THE HIDALGO-REYNOSA INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE. THIS WAS PRE-ARRANGED WITH THE HIDALGO COUNTY SHERIFF, BRIG MARMOLEJO, AND AFTER 30 MINUTES MOVED OFF THE BRIDGE AND THE POLICE LEFT THEM ALONE. THE FARMERS JAMMED THE 50 FOOT-WIDE BRIDGE AND, ACCORDING TO A REPORT FROM THE SHERIFF TO THE PRINCIPAL OFFICER, THE FARMERS DID NOT CROSS THE BOUNDARY WHICH IS CLEARLY MARKED ABOUT HALF-WAY ON THE BRIDGE. MR. MARMOLEJO ALSO SAID THAT BOTH TIMES HE ADVISED THE MEXICAN CONSUL IN MCALLEN OF THE IMPENDING BRIDGE BLOCKADE.

2. THE FARMERS DETAINED A COUPLE OF VEGETABLE TRUCKS WHILE THE TRAFFICK BACKED UP FOR TWO MILES ON EACH SIDE OF THE BORDER. DURING THE INCIDENT ON MARCH 1, WITNESSED BY REPORTING OFFICER FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE BRIDGE ON THE MEXICAN SIDE, THERE WERE NO MEXICANS INJURED BY THE POLICE INTERVENTATION.
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SINCE THERE WERE RIOT POLICE CORDONS AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE BRIDGE AND AT THE OTHER EXTREME CLOSE TO THE BOUNDARY LINE, NO ONE WAS PERMITTED TO CROSS (OTHER THAN THE FARMERS WHO WERE PINNED DOWN BETWEEN THE TWO POLICE LINES). THERE WERE FORCES FROM THE HIDALGO COUNTY SHERIFF DEPARTMENT, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY TROOPERS, POLICEMEN FROM MCALLEN AND HIDALGO, AND SEVERAL OFFICERS FROM U.S. CUSTOMS. ON

SATURDAY THE ONLY POLICE OFFICERS PRESENT BESIDES SHERIFF
MARMOLEJO WERE TWO DPS TROOPERS.

3. BOTH TIMES THE TRAFFIC RESUMED IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE
FARMERS VACATED THE BRIDGE. THE MEXICAN BORDER PRESS
REPORTED THE INCIDENTS OBJECTIVELY. THE CONSUL HAS RECEIVED
NO COMPLAINTS FROM EITHER OFFICIAL OR NONOFFICIAL SOURCES.

4. THE FARMERS ANNOUNCED THE POSSIBILITY OF BLOCKADING
ANOTHER BRIDGE IN THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY, PERHAPS AT BROWNSVILLE,
IN THE NEXT SEVERAL DAYS, AND ALSO SAID THEY WILL GO TO
NOGALES, ARIZONA TO BLOCKADE THE BORDER BRIDGE THERE.
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Message Attributes

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